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## PRESS RELEASE

### **U.S. Government Partners with Radyo ng Bayan to Create Weekly English-Language Radio Program in Mindanao**

**Zamboanga City:** Thanks to development assistance from the American people, thousands of Mindanao residents will have the chance to learn English at home with their own weekly tutor: the radio. Through a program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Radyo ng Bayan network launched *Real World English*, a weekly English-language instructional radio show, on its DXMR Zamboanga City station on March 25.

Radyo ng Bayan, a subsidiary of the Philippine Broadcasting Service (PBS), will broadcast 52 episodes of *Real World English* every Saturday from 2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. from its stations across Mindanao, reaching the provinces of Zamboanga City, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Marawi City. The 30-minute show will provide English-language high school teachers useful information to improve English instruction in the classroom, and expose the general listening public to native English speakers. Prizes will be given each week to selected listeners who provide the right answers to the weekly English lesson questions.

USAID's project introduced the *Real World English* program Project through its Improving English Language Teaching and Learning in Mindanao (IELTLM) project. EQuALLS is a five-year initiative funded by the U.S. Government to promote improvements in elementary and secondary education in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and other conflict-affected areas.

A launching ceremony marked the maiden broadcast of *Real World English* on March 25. Zamboanga City DXMR Radyo ng Bayan Station Manager Danilo Macansantos opened the inaugural broadcast with the remarks: "Through *Real World English*, we hope to contribute to the Department of Education's effort to improve the English language proficiency of our teachers and learners. This is also an opportunity for all of us in Zamboanga City, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Marawi City, and other areas reached by this broadcast to discuss our own Mindanaoan culture even as we speak about the American way of life."

PBS Director Rafael Dante A. Cruz highlighted the power of radio to deliver "practical knowledge and useful information" to the Filipino people. Dr. Thomas Kral, USAID Chief, Office of Education, recalled his time as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines and spoke of traveling throughout the Sulu Archipelago more than 35 years ago, forming friendships with local residents through English language. Dr. Kral also stressed the added importance of English language skills in today's era of globalization.



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IELTLM is a multi-stakeholder education initiative of Real World Productions, Radyo ng Bayan, Ateneo de Zamboanga University, Notre Dame University – Cotabato City, and the Mindanao State University – Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography. USAID provides technical and financial assistance to IELTM through the EQuALLS Project.

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